

to live forever. This one can do after death, if he has during life undergone the necessary consecration, and has learned the words which can open heaven for him. In order to impart the consecration, and break the powers of darkness, one of the higher gods, the Redeemer-God, himself descended to earth. This religious theory is held by secret sects. The folk religions are dead. They can no longer satisfy the wants of men. Those of the same faiths and sentiments meet in secret brotherhood. The East must have been full of such secret sects, which corresponded to the petty states of the earlier period/"¹ There was a very widespread opinion that the world was old and used up so that it could produce no more, just as a woman beyond her prime could no longer bear children.² " Whenever in any people, consciousness of its decline becomes vivid, a strange tendency to self-destruction arises in it. This is not to be explained scientifically, although it has been often observed/" The best commit suicide first, for they do not fear death.³ Romans of wealth and rank committed suicide in the first and second century with astonishing levity; Christians, of the masses, went to martyrdom in the same way. Pliny expresses the feeling that life had little or no value.⁴

107. The Greek temper in prosperity. The Greeks, until the fourth century before Christ, were characterized by the joy of life. They lived in close touch with nature, and the human body was to them not a clog or a curse, but a model of beauty and a means of participating in the activities of nature. Their mores were full of youthful exuberance. Their life philosophy was egoistic and materialistic. They wanted to enjoy all which their powers could win, yet their notion of *olbos* was so elevated that

our modern
 languages have no word for it. It meant opulence,
 with generous
 liberality of sentiment and public spirit. " I do not
 call him who
 lives in prosperity, and has great possessions, a man
 of *olbos*, but
 only a well-to-do treasure keeper." ⁵ Such were the
 mores of the
 age of advance in wealth, population, military art,
 knowledge,
 mental achievement, and fine arts,—all of which
 evidently

¹ Gunkel, *Zum Religions-gesch. Verstdndniss d. JV. T.*,
 19.

^a Seeck, I, 353.
 51, 56,

⁸ *Ibid.* y 364 ff.

⁴ *Hist. Nat.*, VII, 41, 44, 46,

⁶ Euripides, *Antiope*, frag. 32.